

N° 3

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ED. DETALLE
AN IMPORTANT MANTEL CLOCK
Satyr and Bacchante after James Pradier (1790-1852)



Made in Paris c. 1870

Height 51cm (20"), Width 48cm (19"), Depth 28cm (11¼")

Bronze statue: Height 30cm (12"), Width 34cm (13½"), Depth 19cm (8")

Inscribed 'Pradier' in cursive script on front of base; no foundry mark. Signed on the dial: *Ed. Detalle, Rue St Antoine 180, Près la Rue de Rivoli.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY : Tardy, *Dictionnaire des horlogers français*, Paris, 1972 ; *Statues de Chair, sculptures de James Pradier*, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Genève 1985 ; Claude Lapaire, *James Pradier et la sculpture française de la génération romantique*, catalogue raisonné, SIK-ISEA Institut Suisse pour l'Etude de l'Art, 2010.







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Bronze group with light brown patination; reduction of the original marble by James Pradier, now in the Louvre (R.F. 3475); it rests on a black *Mazy* marble pedestal flanked by two volute-shaped capitals, the corners decorated with fluted pilasters in *vert-de-mer* marble.

Half-man, half-goat, the satyr is depicted with horns, hoofs and a tail. With one knee on the ground, the satyr supports on his thigh a swooning female figure and with his free hand removes the light garment that covered her. In a state of rapture, she seems to both push him away and draw him close. Depicted in a posture of sensual surrender, the Bacchante has abandoned her attributes: the thyrsus and drinking cup; on the base the discarded thyrsus rests alongside a tambourine.

French movement with two spring barrels; the time train on the right side with spring suspension adjustable from the front of the dial and self-levelling escapement, both patents from *Achille Brocot*, visible anchor and escape wheel, with jewel half-rollers; the strike train on the left side for every half hour on a silvered bell, countwheel.

Enamel dial on two levels, separated by an ormolu circle, the outer with Roman numerals for the hours and fine graduation for the minutes, the inner with the visible escapement, the two *Breguet*-style blued steel hands, and the signature *Ed. Detalle, Rue St Antoine 180, Près la Rue de Rivoli.* All the visible metallic parts in either polished steel or ormolu, the escape wheel in brass. Front and rear bevelled flat glass.

H: 51cm (20"), W: 48cm (19"), D: 28cm (11¼")

Bronze sculpture: H: 30cm (12"), W: 34cm (13½"), D: 19cm (8")

¹ Detalle. Paris. Rue Saint-Victor, 1850. Rue Saint-Antoine, 1860. (Tardy)

The original marble *Satyr and Bacchante* by James Pradier, now in the Louvre (fig.1), caused quite a stir when it was first exhibited at the Salon of 1834, sending moral and aesthetic shockwaves throughout the Parisian art world. A monumental piece of life-size proportions, the carnal and erotic nature of this group created such a scandal at the time that out of respect for public decency it was relegated to ‘the back corner of a small room.’ Some claimed to recognize the features of Pradier himself and his mistress Juliette Drouet. After the government refused its acquisition, Count Anatoly Demidov purchased the piece and brought it to Italy.



Fig. 1 Jean-Jacques Pradier, known as James (1790 – 1852), *Satyr and Bacchante* Marble, signed and dated *Ft 1834* (H. 125 cm, W. 112 cm, D. 78 cm) RF 3475.

Despite the accusations of indecency, the piece was nevertheless a great success, and several critics considered it a ‘marvellous interpretation of antiquity.’ Other small-scale examples exist in marble, plaster, terracotta (fig.2) and even alabaster, as well as several in bronze (H. 28 to 34 cm), one of which is from the Pradier family collection and another from the sale of the Demidov collection (Paris, 21 April 1870, no. 1581).²



**Fig. 2. *Satyr and Bacchante*, variant with bracelet (1830-1834)
Group in terracotta, H. 31.4 cm (Geneva, Private Collection)**

As a matter of taste, and expense, Pradier preferred stone and marble to the casting process. However, from 1850 onwards, Pradier employed the foundries of Simonet (active from 1827 to c. 1860), Victor Paillard (active from 1835 to 1864) and Charles Quesnel (active from 1818 to 1850) to create editions of his large-scale figures, whereas the Susse foundry produced most, though not all, of the small-scale editions of his work.

Foundries authorized by Pradier to produce bronze editions of his small-scale sculptures continued their execution after his death. The *Catalogue de Vente après décès* [of 1852] lists numerous models ‘sold with full ownership, with rights to reproduce in all manners and size.’ These bronze pieces, which were executed using the sand casting technique, did not always entirely comply with the sculptor’s original model.

² Claude Lapaire, *opus cité-supra*, pp. 267-268.

The fact that the compositions had to be cast in separate sections allowed the founders to modify the shape of the bases, delete attributes and incidental features, and make variations or some modifications to the original model. This is the case of the bronze group presented here: for reasons of modesty, the founder raised the level of the Bacchante's cloth to her lower abdomen, slightly modified the composition with the addition of a tambourine and rendered the satyr's chest practically hairless.

These identical variations can be found on another *Satyr and Bacchante* bronze group also bearing the inscription 'Pradier' on the base (Coll. A in 2003. Purchased at the Christie's sale in New York, 13 October 1994, no. 165a) (fig. 3).



**Fig. 3. *Satyr and Bacchante*, variant with tambourine (1830-1834)
Mat-gilded bronze, H. 32 cm.**

